

CENTRE FOR HEALTH POLICY, PROGRAMS AND ECONOMICS ANNUAL REPORT 2008



Head of the Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics, Professor David Dunt.

HEAD OF CENTRE REPORT

After 17 years as the inaugural Head of the Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics, I'm handing over the reins to Jane Pirkis. Jane has been at the Centre for the past 14 years, and has worked closely with me as Deputy Head for most of that time. Margaret Kelaher will be the new Deputy

Head. I'm looking forward to remaining at the Centre as Professor and Founding Head, and taking the opportunity to explore some research interests which I've had on the back-burner for some time.

Any change of this sort presents an ideal opportunity to reflect on achievements. The Centre was established in 1991, with joint funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and VicHealth, as the NHMRC National Centre for Health Program Evaluation. The National Centre for Health Program Evaluation was a joint venture between the University of Melbourne and Monash University. I led the University of Melbourne's Program Evaluation Unit, and Jeff Richardson led the Health Economics Unit. Health services research was only an emerging discipline at the time, but the National Centre for Health Program Evaluation soon became a prolific contributor to academic and policy debates on the delivery of health care in Australia.

By 1996, the Centre was successfully attracting funding from a range of sources, and no longer reliant on core funding from the NHMRC and VicHealth. It changed its name to reflect this, and became the Centre for Health Program Evaluation. We were regularly attracting funding from key granting bodies and from government departments. Our revenue and staff numbers continued to grow, as did our influence on the health policy landscape.

In 2003, further change occurred. After 12 years together, the Program Evaluation Unit and the Health Economics Unit returned to their respective universities. Both groups had become extremely successful at attracting funding for research and teaching and in producing high quality academic papers and policy-relevant reports. Both were acting as centres in their own right, and the return to their respective home campuses was a reflection of this mutual independence. By this stage, the Program Evaluation Unit had its own health economics expertise as well as proficiency in health program evaluation and health policy. The Program Evaluation Unit became an integral part of the Melbourne School of Population Health, contributing significantly to the research and teaching conducted in the School.

In 2006, the Program Evaluation Unit was recognised as a centre by the University, and in 2007 it was launched as the Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics. The new name better reflects its strengths and broadening interest in health policy. The Centre is aiming to engage strategically in policy development with the main stakeholders in the health care system.

This brings us to 2008. This was an extremely good

The Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics is a multidisciplinary organisation, the core business of which is health services and policy research and health economics. Its staff have expertise in program evaluation, health economics, economic evaluation, health law, epidemiology, social sciences and research methodology, and many have clinical backgrounds.

The mission of the CHPPE is to contribute to the health of the community through research, teaching and service relevant to health programs and policy. It aims to do this by advancing relevant knowledge and addressing relevant issues productively and flexibly. It also includes methodological development, exemplary practice and a varied program of teaching and training. It aims to achieve this mission by improving the community's ability to critically evaluate the performance and funding of health policy and health programs.

year for us in terms of all of the three strands of the University's Growing Esteem agenda: Research and Research Training; Learning and Teaching; and Knowledge Transfer. We were awarded six new NHMRC and ARC competitive grants and fellowships to commence in 2009, totaling \$4.1 million. We published 21 peer-reviewed journal articles and 22 other publications. We had 19 students enrolled in PhDs, as well as 266 student enrolments in the Master of Public Health from both The University of Melbourne and other universities in the Victorian Consortium of Public Health undertaking our postgraduate units in Program Evaluation and Health Economics. We continued to play a key role in influencing policy. For example, I authored a paper arguing that a new paradigm or model for the Australian health care system is urgently needed to address the chronic illness epidemics that dominate patterns of disease in this country currently. This paper became the core of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Science's submission to the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

Our new Advisory Committee met for the first time and provided very valuable input on strategic direction for the Centre. Its members are:

Mr Peter Allen (The Under Secretary, Portfolio Services and Strategic Projects Division, Victorian Department of Human Services)

Professor Mark Considine (Head of School, Centre for Public Policy, School of Political Science, Criminology and Sociology, The University of Melbourne)

Mr Philip Davies (Deputy Secretary, Department of Health and Ageing)

Mr Bruce R Dixon (Managing Director, Healthscope Limited)

Mr Chris Rex, (Chief Executive Officer, Ramsay Health Care)

Mr Todd Harper (Chief Executive Officer, VicHealth)

Mr Alan Kinkade (Group Chief Executive, Epworth Hospital)

Dr Brendan Murphy (Chief Executive Officer, Austin Health)

Professor Terry Nolan (Head, Melbourne School of Population Health, The University of Melbourne)

Professor Stephen Sedgwick (Director, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research)

Professor Doris Young (Chair of General Practice, Department of General Practice, The University of Melbourne).

Other important highlights of the year include staff promotions and awards. I was appointed to Professor and Margaret Kelaher to Associate Professor. Jane Pirkis was awarded a National Health and Medical Research Council Senior Research Fellowship, Colleen Doyle was awarded an Alzheimer's Association Research and JR Wicking trust travelling scholarship for 'Consumer involvement in dementia care evaluation, research and policy', and Dr Susan Day successfully completed her PhD.

The CHPPE continued to attract visitors keen to undertake the overseas placement component

of their postgraduate training at the Centre.

We hosted four visitors completing their post doctoral training from the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine in Colombo. They were Doctors Janani Pinidiyapathirage, Nayana De Alwis, Rasika Rampatige and Kapila Jayaratne. Annemiek Huisman, from the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, also visited our Centre as part of her PhD overseas placement.

I have to say I feel very proud of the achievements of the Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics. The Centre is recognised both within Australia and internationally as a leader in the field, and has helped put health services and policy research on the agenda here and overseas. I'm pleased to be handing the baton on to Jane, and I'm sure that she'll continue to keep the Centre in good shape!

– **Professor David Dunt**

LEARNING AND TEACHING

In 2008 enrolments continued to grow in our range of MPH, higher degree and short course offerings. Continued growth reflects a number of factors: the quality of our teaching and learning programs; professional and government interest in evidence-based public health policy, and health sector demand for practical skills in policy, program and service evaluation. The continuation of flexible delivery modes in our core subjects in health program evaluation also supports enrolment growth.

Master of Public Health

Strong enrolments are particularly evident in the subjects taught within the Master of Public Health. The foundation subject, Health Economics and Program Evaluation, continues to attract a large number of students across the four universities: Deakin University, La Trobe University, Monash University and The University of Melbourne. Cathy Segan, back from maternity leave, coordinated the subject with Arthur Hsueh. David Dunt, Rosemary McKenzie, Theonie Tacticos, and Lucio Naccarella provided lectures, and a large team of staff expert in health economics and health program evaluation joined the coordinators and lecturers in delivery of tutorials to the 143 students enrolled in the subject in 2008.

At the start of 2008 we farewelled Jenni Livingston, the longstanding coordinator of health program evaluation teaching and learning in CHPPE. Jenni has played a key role in the successful development of our health program evaluation curriculum. Her expertise in health program evaluation and her outstanding teaching skills have undoubtedly underpinned the strong enrolments in the health program evaluation specialisation. We wish Jenni well in her new role at the University. Jenni's coordination, lecturing and research project supervision roles have been assumed by Rosemary McKenzie.

As in previous years, MPH students had access to the following suite of health economics/economic evaluation subjects in 2008:

- Health Economics: Arthur Hsueh, Subject Coordinator.
- Economic Evaluation 1: Arthur Hsueh/Steve Crowley, Subject Coordinators.
- Economic Evaluation 2: Steve Crowley, Subject Coordinator.
- Research Project in Health Economics: Arthur Hsueh, Subject Coordinator.

In the health program evaluation field, the following subjects were available in 2008. All are available in distance mode and on-campus.

- Health Program Evaluation 1: Rosemary McKenzie, Subject Coordinator.
- Health Program Evaluation 2: David Dunt and Rosemary McKenzie, Subject Coordinators.
- Research Project in Health Program Evaluation: Rosemary McKenzie, Subject Coordinator.

The popular Methods for Evaluating Health Services 1, coordinated by Margaret Kelaher, is offered on a biennial basis and will be offered again in semester 2, 2009.

During 2008, a record number of students completed their two semester Research Project in either Health Economics/Economic Evaluation or Health Program Evaluation. Nine students completed a research project with an economic focus and 18 completed a research project with a program evaluation focus. Research projects were of a very high standard and in many cases have directly contributed to health program improvement in public health agencies, both locally and overseas. Students completed research projects on the following topics:

- **Shahela Anwar**, supervisor Steve Crowley. Protocol for cost effectiveness evaluation of integrating HIB vaccination to the National Immunisation Program in Bangladesh.
- **Murray Baker**, supervisors Jenni Livingston and Richard Osborne. Evaluation of chronic condition self management staff training at ISIS primary care.
- **Yu-Ping Chen**, supervisor Associate Professor Bridget Hsu-Hage. The development of a program evaluation plan for the P.A.C.E. service model.
- **I-Lan Chiu**, supervisors Rosemary McKenzie and Bridget Bassilios. Evaluation of the Cobram Mental Health Nurse program.
- **Lauren Cordwell**, supervisor Jenni Livingston. A program evaluation of Health Issues Centre's Consumer Nominee Program.
- **Melissa Coutts**, supervisor Rosemary McKenzie. An evaluation of the impact of the MyTime parenting program on organisational capacity and partnerships.
- **David Dawson**, supervisor David Dunt. Evaluation of a university based education program for ambulance paramedics.
- **Anita Deutschmann**, supervisor Helen Jordan. Project ORCHID – An HIV AIDS harm reduction initiative in Northeast India.
- **Timothy Fry**, supervisor David Dunt. Evaluation of the Going off Tap program.
- **Brynn Lewin**, supervisors Jenni Livingston and Lynn Gillam. Early childhood intervention: The family experience (evaluation plan).
- **Claire Keith**, supervisor Andrew Dalton. The cost effectiveness of using unfractionated heparin versus a low molecular weight heparin to prevent venous thromboembolism in general medical patients.
- **Su Yeon Kwon**, supervisors Arthur Hsueh and Macrae Finlay. Economic evaluation of new colon bowel screening program in Australia.
- **Huy Lim**, supervisor Rosemary McKenzie. Protocol to assess the implementation and interim effects of the Global Fund.
- **Ramona Martinovici**, supervisor Rosemary McKenzie. Evaluation of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights across DHS.
- **Hollie McCaig**, supervisors Jenni Livingston and Lynn Gillam. The experience of parents and children where children have been supported with a ventricular assist device as a bridge to heart transplantation.
- **Marcia Monjane**, supervisors Rosemary McKenzie and James Black. Caring for the workforce: An assessment protocol for the HIV and AIDS workplace program in the Health Sector, Mozambique.
- **Mutsa Mutowa**, supervisor Steve Crowley. Malaria: A protocol to investigate which vector control program – Insecticide treated nets (ITNs) or Indoor residual spraying (IRS): What is the most incremental cost effectiveness of ITNs vs IRS in the fight against malaria in developing countries.
- **Mathew Ng'ambi**, supervisor David Dunt. Evaluating the impact of the health care financing policy on operations of 2nd level hospitals in Zambia: Devising, implementing and reporting on a very small-scale evaluation.
- **Philippa Robinson**, supervisor Andrew Dalton. Development of an economic evaluation protocol for breastfeeding promotion programs.
- **Lauren Schmid**, supervisor Steve Crowley. Measuring preferences in health care: Is conjoint analysis under-utilised in economic evaluations?
- **Roger Smith**, supervisor Andrew Dalton. Cost Effectiveness of a Tumour Necrosis Factor Inhibitor for the Prevention of Complications Following Cardiac Surgery.
- **Htet Soe**, supervisor David Dunt. Evaluation of Hospital Information System in rural hospitals in developing countries (Myanmar).
- **Sigit Sulisty**, supervisor Jenni Livingston. Do growth monitoring and promotion programs motivate mothers to change behaviour: A systematic review using combination of Cochrane-style systematic reviews and realist reviews.
- **Dwidjo Susilo**, supervisor David Dunt. Economics of reducing drug related harm among injecting drug users in Indonesia.

- **Hendri Hartati Taryono**, supervisor Andrew Dalton. Protocol on cost utility analysis of introducing HIB vaccine into infant immunization services in Indonesia.
- **Lavanya Vijayasingham**, Supervisor Steve Crowley. A literature-based economic evaluation of neuraminidase inhibitors (NA inh) for the treatment of influenza in a non-pandemic.
- **Carmen Yiu**, supervisors Jenni Livingston and Carol Jewell. Development of the evaluation plan of the Melbourne Health Allied Health Education Strategy Objective: Investment in the quality of current and future staff through relevant education programs.

Higher Degree Students

There were 19 PhD students enrolled in 2008, which includes five students new to the program. Susan Day was awarded her PhD in June. The details were:

- **Susan Day**: An investigation into the extent to which General Practitioner (GP) remuneration can be used to overcome

geographic inequities in the supply of, and demand for, Medicare-funded GP services.

Short Courses

Health Program Evaluation

The three-day short course in Health Program Evaluation is coordinated and delivered by Helen Jordan, a lecturer at the Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics. The course was delivered at the Centre in February, July and December of 2008. A total of 36 health professionals working in government, health services, health promotion, and the tertiary sector participated.

The course provides an opportunity for practical, workplace oriented learning about health program evaluation, with a particular emphasis on program evaluation planning and program logic development. The course also provides the opportunity for health practitioners who share an interest in health program evaluation to network and undertake group work.

Helen Jordan also delivers the course at workplaces across Australia and is currently negotiating a number of courses to be delivered in South Australia in 2009.

SEMINAR PROGRAM

Once again, the Centre's lunchtime Seminar Series, which is open to all colleagues and the general public, proved to be extremely successful. The seminar topics are chosen to highlight current and key aspects of the Centre's Research Program.

DATE	PRESENTER	TOPIC
4 March	Bridget Bassilios	Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services (ATAPS) project.
18 March	Andrew Dare	Media Monitoring Project.
1 April	Margaret Kelaher	What has Kylie taught us? Use of breast cancer screening and treatment by Australian women aged 25-44 following Kylie Minogue's breast cancer diagnosis.
29 April	David Dunt	The Australian health care system: 'It's so 20 th century darling': thinking through a new paradigm to meet the chronic diseases epidemic.
13 May	Colleen Doyle	Dementia is my life now: Benefits and barriers to consumer involvement in dementia research, evaluation and training.
27 May	Fay Kohn	Utilisation of findings from the evaluation of a major primary mental health care initiative in Australia.
10 June	Justine Fletcher	Services of psychologists on the Medicare Benefits Schedule: Experiences of providers and their clients.
24 June	Peter Feldman	The buggers keep on moving! Population mobility effects in the evaluation of area-based programs.
8 July	Kristen Moeller-Saxone	Smoking and mental illness.
22 July	Noleen Bennett	Small hospitals big challenges: The Victorian hospital acquired infection surveillance program.
5 August	Lennart Reifels	Workforce Challenges in Mental Health: A Victorian PDRS Sector Study.
19 August	Jane Pirkis	Carer Outcome Measurement in Mental Health Services.
2 September	Tshepo Rasekaba	Chronic Disease Management: A cross-sectional study of characteristics of chronic disease patients of the Northern Alliance HARP-CDM.
30 September	Angeline Ferdinand	How do we know it's working? Challenges in evaluating program impacts on refugee and migrant communities.
14 October	Arthur Hsueh	Health, Ageing and Economics: An analysis from the HILDA survey data of Australia.
11 November	Shelby Williamson	Evaluation of the Queensland Government Suicide Prevention Strategy.
25 November	Andrew Dare	The New Black: Changes in media reporting of depression between 2001 and 2007.

Quality boost in media's reporting on suicide

The number of media reports about suicide almost doubled over a six-year period, with the steep rise accompanied by a significant improvement in the quality of reporting.

This is the 'lead' in the 'good news' story that emerged from The Media Monitoring Project by CHPPE (Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics) at Melbourne School of Population Health.

Associate Professor Jane Pirkis, who will become head of CHPPE in early 2009, said the project evaluated changes in Australian news media reporting of suicide between 2000/01 and 2006/07 against recommendations in the resource *Reporting Suicide and Mental Illness*.

The resource was released in 2002 as part of the Australian Government's Mindframe National Media Initiative, which aimed to encourage responsible, accurate, and sensitive media portrayal of suicide.

There was almost a two-fold increase in reporting of suicide during the monitoring project period, with 4813 and 8363 items retrieved in 2000/01 and 2006/07, respectively.

The CHPPE project's report, *Changes in media reporting of suicide and mental health and illness in Australia: 2000-01 – 2006-07*, noted: "Most strikingly, there was significant improvement on almost all individual dimensions of quality and overall quality."

Associate Professor Pirkis said the Mindframe campaign, which targeted professionals in the media, courts, police and mental health and suicide prevention, was undoubtedly a major contributor to the increase in the appropriate portrayal of suicide and other mental health issues in media reports and in television and film scripts.

Associate Professor Pirkis paid tribute to the "fantastic" work of the Hunter Institute of Mental Health in actively disseminating resources to guide media practitioners in how to report mental health issues sensibly and responsibly. While other countries had similar guidelines, she said, she believed the evaluation showed that Australia had done a much better job of having them adopted by the media because of the concerted dissemination campaign by the Hunter Institute, she said. The free education resource package, 'Response Ability',

for example, had been highly successful. CHPPE's evaluation project provided evidence for providing continuing support to the Mindframe campaign.

"The media does have a role in educating the public," she said. "One of the ways they can do that is by indicating that suicide is quite a complex problem that is often related to mental illness. It's rare for suicide to be the result of one event."

Improving the way the media reports suicide and mental health issues has important public health implications, she said. "It helps to reinforce the community's knowledge about suicide and may reduce the possibility of copycat behaviours." For vulnerable or easily influenced groups, such as young people, it was crucial to avoid simplistic explanations that presented suicide as an impulsive solution to an unhappy event, for example, or to portray it as glamorous.

The CHPPE researchers are beginning to explore ways to study Internet coverage of suicide, which opens new research



Associate Professor Jane Pirkis, who will become head of CHPPE in early 2009, with CHPPE head Professor David Dunt.

challenges because of the dynamic nature of the medium.

Along with the Mindframe campaign, she also credited the activities of mental health organisations such as beyondblue and SANE Australia with destigmatising mental illness and raising public awareness during the period of the evaluation.

The Media Monitoring Project's findings are due to be published in the journal *Crisis* in 2009.

RESEARCH

The CHPPE undertakes evaluations of health programs and policies at international, national, state and local levels. Since its establishment, the CHPPE has attracted over \$38 million in funding from key granting bodies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Australian Research Council (ARC) and from organisations such as Commonwealth and state/territory health departments that fund contract

research. Over half of this funding has come directly to the CHPPE and the remaining funding has been shared with collaborating agencies. Since 2007, the CHPPE has focused its research around four work streams: Health Economics, Health Policy and Law, Mental Health and Primary Care.

Details of new and existing research activities are set out under the four work streams, including major grants awarded.

HEALTH ECONOMICS

The Health Economics Work Stream includes health economics in general and economic evaluation in particular. In 2008, the research focused on economic evaluation. One major project, 'The impact of Chlamydia on the health and health care system of Victorians – an analysis of available data', was funded by the Department of Human Services. The work stream was responsible for the economic evaluation component for this project. Another project, 'Increasing community pharmacy involvement in the prevention of cardiovascular disease', was funded by The Pharmacy Guild of Australia. The work stream was also responsible for the economic evaluation component for this project. Further details are below.

How does chlamydia infection impact on the sexual, reproductive and mental health of Victorians and the Victorian health care system?

Funding Body: Department of Human Services, Victoria.

Chief Investigators: Jane Hocking, Christopher Fairley, Meredith Temple-Smith (Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne), Louise Keogh, Marcus Chen, Jane Fisher, Hennie Williams, Arthur Hsueh, D Henning (Centre for Adolescent Health, Royal Children's Hospital), Christine Bayly, K McNamee (Family Planning Victoria).

Description: This project will use different research methods to make an assessment of the impact of chlamydia on the sexual, reproductive, mental health and economic aspect of Victorians and their health care system. The research methods include a comprehensive literature review, analysis and evaluation of existing data sources, qualitative interviews with key informants, people affected by chlamydia and health care professionals and quantitative surveys. We will review participatory action-based chlamydia programs and will assess the economic evaluation literature of chlamydia control strategies.

Funding: \$186,869.49

Increasing community pharmacy involvement in the prevention of cardiovascular disease

Funding body: The Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Lead Investigators: Kay Stewart, Johnson George, (Monash University), Shane Jackson, Gregory Peterson, (University of Tasmania), Jeffery Hughes (Curtin University), Kevin Mc Namara (Flinders and Deakin Universities), Michael Bailey (Monash University), Arthur Hsueh. **Co-investigators:** Jenny McDowell (Monash University), Luke Bereznicki, Peter Gee (University of Tasmania).

Description: The research and development funded under this tender will, following literature review and stakeholder consultation, develop and trial a comprehensive, multifactorial intervention package to assist community pharmacists to address the problem of poor patient compliance with antihypertensive medicines.

Funding: \$1,343,126.67 (\$75,000 to CHPPE)

Existing research activities carried over from previous years include:

- Assessing Cost Effectiveness (ACE) in prevention (funding for two PhD scholarships).
- Priority setting in Aboriginal health: Planning for the prevention of non-communicable diseases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.

HEALTH POLICY & LAW

2008 marked the second year of the Centre's new stream of work in health policy and law, which began with David Studdert's arrival in January, 2007. The health policy and law group:

- Secured federal funding for three research projects (described below)
- Launched studies examining the regulation of pathology services, alternative models of compensation for medical injury, and the influence of the compensation processes on the speed of recovery of persons injured in transport accidents
- Continued to plan research programs in the work of coroners' and suicide prevention.

Professor Studdert acted as a key consultant to the Victorian Law Reform Commission's inquiry into abortion law, and helped draft the widely-publicised report to Parliament on the inquiry's findings.

The major research activities funded this year were:

When informed consent goes poorly: A descriptive study of health care complaints and medical negligence claims

Funding Body: Australian Research Council (ARC).

Chief Investigators: David Studdert, Russell Gruen (Department of Surgery, Royal Melbourne Hospital, University of Melbourne).

Partner Organisations: Victorian Health Services Commission, Avant Mutual Group Limited.

Description: To correct process failures effectively, one must understand them. This project will improve knowledge of problems and disputes that arise when patients are consented for medical treatment – an enterprise in which thousands of Australians, many at very vulnerable stages of their lives, are engaged daily. Study findings will advance understanding of breakdowns in the informed consent process and help shape strategies for reducing them. Our partner organisations are extraordinarily well-placed to carry insights from this work to health professionals in the field, enhancing opportunities for real benefits to patients from the research. The project fits with the national research priority of promoting and maintaining good health.

Funding: \$174,000

Drug Companies, their Patenting Strategies and High-Cost Pharmaceuticals: An Empirical Investigation

Funding Body: Australian Research Council (ARC).

Chief Investigators: Andrew Christie (Melbourne Law School, University of Melbourne), David Studdert, Peter McIntyre (Department of Pharmacology, University of Melbourne) and Chris Dent (Melbourne Law School, University of Melbourne).

Description: Pharmaceuticals are a vital part of clinical services that maintain and improve Australia's health; they are also costly, absorbing a substantial proportion of the national health expenditures. By conferring market protections, the patent system helps the manufacturers of pharmaceuticals to recoup the high costs of research associated with developing new products. Abuses of the patent system by pharmaceutical manufacturers have the potential to stifle competition and inappropriately raise the costs of pharmaceuticals to society. This innovative, cross-disciplinary research will investigate the existence of abusive patents and, if use of such strategies is identified, propose reforms aimed at curbing this contributor to health care costs.

Funding: \$290,000

Legal Implications of Open Disclosure in Australia

Funding Body: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

Chief Investigator: David Studdert.

Description: Provision of expert legal advice on changes necessary to implement and achieve an effective and consistent regulatory framework in Australia to support transparency between providers and patients around medical injuries.

Funding: \$95,715.45 (and \$10,112 for preliminary scoping study.)

MENTAL HEALTH

The Mental Health Work Stream continues to conduct internationally-recognised projects in the area of mental health and suicide prevention, under the leadership of Jane Pirkis.

Several projects were completed in 2008. Andrew Dare, Shelby Williamson and Jane Pirkis completed a study examining outcome measures for carers of people with mental illness. Andrew Dare and Jane Pirkis finished an investigation into media reporting of depression. Jo Christo, Angela Delle Vergini and Jane Pirkis finalised work on a project which aimed to develop a set of clinical prompts for mental health care providers.

A number of previously-funded projects continued throughout the year. Jane Pirkis maintained her involvement with the Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network. Jane Pirkis and Shelby Williamson continued an evaluation of the Queensland Government Suicide Prevention Strategy. Shelby Williamson and Jane Pirkis also continued to collaborate with interstate colleagues on a randomised controlled trial of an intervention designed to improve GPs ability to detect and manage depression and suicidality among their older patients. Justine Fletcher, Bridget Bassilios, Fay Kohn and Jane Pirkis continued to work on the ongoing evaluation of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care program, attracting additional funding for the evaluation of some recent modifications to the program. Justine Fletcher ably managed an evaluation of a new set of Medicare Benefits Schedule item numbers which provide reimbursement for psychologists' services.

2008 also saw the commencement of several new projects. Jane Pirkis, Justine Fletcher, Bridget Bassilios and Fay Kohn were successful in securing funding for an evaluation of the Better Access initiative. Andrew Dare built on a series of earlier projects on reporting of suicide and mental illness in newspapers and on radio and television by beginning one project exploring how the internet deals with these issues and another examining the experiences of journalists who have won awards for responsible reporting of suicide. Further details are below:

The Australian Health News Research Collaboration

Funding Body: National Health and Medical Research Council.

Chief Investigators: Simon Chapman (University of Sydney), Warwick Blood (University of Canberra), Jane Pirkis.

Description: News media are highly influential in setting health agendas and shaping health policy. The program builds multidisciplinary research capacity between three universities, including participation by some of Australia's leading health journalists, to examine the content and accuracy of news treatments of health issues, how key audiences understand and are influenced by news coverage, how journalists decide which issues to cover and how they approach this coverage. The program aims to improve media literacy and the potency of policy advocacy among health professionals and so improve the quality of health news reporting in Australia.

Funding: \$1,897,375

Evaluation of the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and GPs through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (Better Access) Initiative

Funding Body: Department of Health and Ageing.

Chief Investigators: Jane Pirkis, Meredith Harris (University of Queensland), Lyn Littlefield (Australian Psychological Society), Cathy Mihalopoulos (Deakin University), Grant Blashki (Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne), Philip Burgess (University of Queensland), Tim Coombs (NSW Institute of Psychiatry), Justine Fletcher, Bridget Bassilios, Fay Kohn, Anthony Scott (Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research), Sarah Gill (Australian National University).

Description: The Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (Better Access) initiative aims to improve outcomes for people with mental disorders by encouraging a multi-disciplinary approach to their mental health care. It takes the form of a series of new item numbers which have been added to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS). Component A of the evaluation involves a study of consumers and their outcomes; and Component B involves an analysis of MBS and Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule (PBS) data to profile the uptake of the item numbers and examine the impact of Better Access on patterns of MBS and PBS service usage over the two years prior to and following the introduction of Better Access.

Funding: \$747,275

Online Media Monitoring Project

Funding Body: Department of Health and Ageing.

Chief Investigators: Jane Pirkis, Andrew Dare, R Warwick Blood (University of Canberra).

Description: This is a scoping study, designed to inform future research into reporting and portrayal of suicide and mental illness on the Internet. It involves a literature review and two components: (1) an analysis of blogs containing material related to suicide and mental illness; and (2) a comparison of reporting and portrayal of suicide and mental illness in print and online versions of newspapers.

Funding: \$240,823

Media Awards for Responsible Reporting of Suicide: A Cross-National Study

Funding Body: Unfunded project.

Chief Investigators: Jane Pirkis, Andrew Dare, Karl Andriessen (Flemish Mental Health Centres, Belgium), Merete Nordentoft (Copenhagen University, Denmark).

Description: Australia, Belgium and Denmark all have media awards for examples of responsible reporting of suicide. This project involves qualitative interviews with the recipients of these awards, and aims to examine the impact of the awards on reporting practices.

Funding: Nil

Existing research activities carried over from previous years included:

- Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services Component of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Program – *additional funding received in 2008*
- Evaluation of the Queensland Government Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Clinical prompts project
- Carer outcome measurement in mental health services
- Monitoring media reporting of depression
- An evaluation of the new Medicare Benefits Schedule psychologist item numbers: Impacts for psychologists and their patients
- Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network
- Reducing depression and suicide amongst older Australians: A cluster randomised clinical trial in primary health care
- Health risk screening of adolescents in primary care: A cluster randomised controlled trial.

PRIMARY CARE

The Primary Care Work Stream includes evaluations of projects run in general practice and other primary care settings, projects aimed at increasing the health and wellbeing of particular consumer groups (e.g., older people, people with diabetes, people with dementia) and/or projects that have a health education focus. Much of the work of the Primary Care Work Stream involves developing the capacity of funders and project workers to undertake evaluations of their own. 2008 saw major developments in CHPPE's involvement in evaluating and improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to primary care. This included research on access to eye health services and medicines, the evaluation of life style interventions and the design of interventions to improve access to diabetes care through mainstream general practice. This area will be further developed in 2009 with a project that will identify interventions to improve the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in general practice and a project that will evaluate a family-centred smoking control program to reduce respiratory illness in Indigenous infants.

In 2008 the Primary Care Work Stream continued to consolidate activities in the national evaluation of 17 projects funded under the Australian Government's Dementia Initiative. An important Interim Report was presented to the Department of Health and Ageing, and the project team summarised evaluation activities for the Minister's Dementia Advisory Board. The evaluation report contributed to the Minister's decision to provide continuation of funding for the \$300 million Dementia Initiative program beyond 2009.

The Primary Care Work Stream attracted funding for the following new projects:

A study of a family-centred smoking control program to reduce respiratory illness in Indigenous infants

Funding Body: NHMRC.

Chief Investigators: David P Thomas, Vanessa Johnston, Ngiare J Brown, Anne B Chang (Menzies School of Health Research), Cathy J Segan.

Funding: \$864,875

Improving the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in General Practice

Funding Body: Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute.

Chief Investigators: Margaret Kelaher, Ian Anderson, Yin Paradies, Jane Freemantle.

Description: The purpose of this study is to identify promising interventions to improve the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in General Practice. This will improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to new Medicare programs specific to their needs.

Funding: \$250,000

Culturally appropriate diabetes care in mainstream general practice for urban Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

Funding Body: NHMRC.

Chief Investigators: Siaw-teng Liaw, John Furler (Department of General Practice), Kevin Rowley, Priscilla Pyett, Margaret Kelaher, Phyllis Lau (Department of General Practice).

Description: The aim of this research is to develop an intervention to assist mainstream services to deliver culturally appropriate services and ensure a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

Funding: \$316,000

Mapping use of eye health services by Indigenous people

Funding Body: Indigenous Eye Health Unit – Minum Barrang.

Chief Investigators: Margaret Kelaher, Hugh Taylor.

Description: Maps the use of eye health services by Indigenous people throughout Australia. These data will be linked with epidemiological data to inform future interventions in eye health for Indigenous people.

Funding: \$50,000

Management of depression in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Funding Body: beyondblue.

Chief Investigators: Colleen Doyle, David Dunt, David Ames (National Ageing Research Institute).

Description: This project is investigating the management of mental health in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease who attend pulmonary rehabilitation clinics and patient support groups throughout Victoria. Patients will be invited to complete a self-report questionnaire about their physical and mental health, and will then be followed up at a later date to determine whether they are still attending rehabilitation. Pulmonary rehabilitation coordinators will also be interviewed regarding their management of the mental health of their clients. The outcome of the study will be further understanding of the factors affecting compliance with rehabilitation.

Funding: \$99,964

Evaluation of the 'Go for your life' Being Active and Eating Well Indigenous community demonstration initiative

Funding Body: The Department of Human Services.

Chief Investigators: Margaret Kelaher.

Description: The purpose of this study is to provide information to assist in the preparation and submission of proposals for the development of an evaluation framework, evaluation tools and collection of baseline data for the 'Go for your life' Being Active and Eating Well Indigenous community demonstration initiative.

Funding: \$65,544

Evaluation of Western Hospital Admission Risk Program Chronic Disease Management (HARP CDM)

Funding Body: Western Health.

Chief Investigators: David Dunt.

Description: The aim of the project is to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of systems to improve the safety and quality of Western HARP services.

Funding: \$22,900

Development of a quality assurance framework for the Alzheimer's Australia Victoria Counselling Services

Funding body: Alzheimer's Australia.

Chief Investigators: Colleen Doyle, Susan Day, Pauline Van Dort.

Description: The Alzheimer's Australia Victoria Counselling Service funded a small project to investigate the quality assurance framework for the service. The project involves developing a program logic model in collaboration with service staff, reviewing the international and grey literature on effective interventions for carers of people living with dementia, and recommending measures to improve the quality assurance mechanisms of the service.

Funding: \$7,242

Existing research activities carried over from previous years included:

- Evaluation of Building Bridges Phase 11 (Evaluating Practice to Reduce Discrimination Affecting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities)
- National Evaluation of the Australian Government Dementia Health Priority Initiative
- Helping smokers with a history of depression quit smoking safely: Depression and smoking cessation outcomes among clients of a tailored quitline callback service offering doctor-quitline co-management of smoking cessation and depression
- Responding to health inequalities: Investigating the impact of Neighbourhood Renewal on health and well-being in disadvantaged Victorian communities
- Raising awareness of prevention programs for chronic pulmonary disease
- Arts and Health Strategy
- Evaluation of the VicHealth Community Arts Development Scheme
- Evaluation of surveillance programs for nosocomial infection in smaller hospitals
- Interventions to improve evidence-based prescribing for heart failure.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

During 2008 CHPPE staff continued to be active in the wider community as members of important advisory committees, reviewers of potential articles for a variety of refereed journals and assessors of grant applications. In addition, staff conducted specialist reviews of a range of health services. An important example of the latter is Professor David Dunt's two 'eminent person' reviews for the Department of Veteran Affairs and the Department of Defence Science and Personnel. The reviews are:

1. A Review of Mental Health Care in the Armed Defence Forces and Transition through Discharge (Ministers of Veteran Affairs and Defence Science and Personnel); and
2. An Independent Study into Suicide in the Ex-Service Community (Commonwealth Minister of Veteran Affairs).

Further details of community activities are below:

Committee Memberships

David Dunt

- Treasurer, Health Service Research Association of Australia and New Zealand
- Submission to National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission.

Bridget Hsu-Hage

- Board Director, Goulburn Valley Health. Goulburn Valley Health received the Premier's Award for the Regional Public Health Service of the Year
- Board Director, Chinese Health Foundation of Australia.

Margaret Kelaheer

- Health Ambassador, UNESCO Observatory on Multi-disciplinary Research.

Rosemary McKenzie

- Member of the Evaluation Working Group of the National Prescribing Service Ltd (Ongoing appointment since 2006).

Jane Pirkis

- Country Representative (Australia), International Association for Suicide Prevention
- Chair, Suicide and the Media Task Force, International Association for Suicide Prevention
- Executive Member, Health Services Research Association of Australia and New Zealand
- Ordinary Member, Suicide Prevention Australia
- Member, Scientific Committee, 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for Suicide Prevention, Hong Kong, 31 October – 3 November.

David Studdert

- Board Member, Trinity College, University of Melbourne
- Chair, Research Advisory Committee of the Primary Care Research Unit, Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne

- Chair, Health Ethics Review Group, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne
- Member of the Committee of Judges for the Alice S. Hersh New Investigator Award, Academy Health.

Pauline van Dort

- Board Member, Australian Polish Community Services.

Referee and Assessor Services for Grant Applications and Journals

Grant Bodies

David Dunt

- Assessor, National Health and Medical Research Council project grants and Capacity Building Grants.

Margaret Kelaheer

- Member, Public Health Grant Review Panel, National Health and Medical Research Council Project Grants
- Reviewer, Canada Foundation for Innovation's Research Hospital Fund.

Jane Pirkis

- Member, Public Health Grant Review Panel, National Health and Medical Research Council Project Grants
- Member, Selection Committee, Australian Rotary Health Research Fund Mental Health Research Grants
- Member, Selection Committee, Australian Rotary Health Research Fund Mental Health Evaluation Grants
- Member, Scientific Committee, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

David Studdert

- Assessor, AusAid Development Research Awards.

Journals

Andrew Dalton

- Reviewer, Medical Journal of Australia.

Colleen Doyle

- Reviewer, International Psychogeriatrics.

David Dunt

- Member of the Editorial Board, International Journal Family Practice
- Reviewer, Family Practice
- Reviewer, Medical Journal of Australia
- Reviewer, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health
- Reviewer, BMC Family Practice, BMC Health Services Research
- Reviewer, Health Promotion International
- Reviewer, European Journal of General Practice.

Arthur Hsueh

- Reviewer, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health
- Reviewer, Journal of PharmacoEconomics
- Reviewer, Health Economics
- Reviewer, BMC Health Services Research.

Bridget Hsu-Hage

- Member Editorial Board, Current Diabetes Reviews
- Member Editorial Board, Global Health.

Helen Jordan

- Reviewer, article for International Breastfeeding Journal.

Margaret Kelaher

- Member Editorial Board, Health Policy
- Member Editorial Board, UNESCO Journal for Multi-disciplinary Research and the Arts
- Reviewer, Lancet
- Reviewer, Social Science and Medicine
- Reviewer, Journal of Preventive Medicine
- Reviewer, International Journal of Epidemiology
- Reviewer, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health
- Reviewer, Health Policy
- Reviewer, Journal of Remote and Rural Health
- Reviewer, Australian Journal of Public Health.

Fay Kohn

- Book reviewer, Evaluation Journal of Australasia.

Jane Pirkis

- Member, Editorial Board, Crisis
- Member, Editorial Board, International Journal of Mental Health Systems
- Reviewer, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry
- Reviewer, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health
- Reviewer, Crisis
- Reviewer, International Journal of Mental Health Systems
- Reviewer, Journal of Affective Disorders
- Reviewer, Journal of Health Services Research and Policy
- Reviewer, Medical Journal of Australia
- Reviewer, New Zealand Medical Journal
- Reviewer, Psychological Medicine
- Reviewer, Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology
- Reviewer, Social Science and Medicine.

David Studdert

- Reviewer, Lancet
- Reviewer, Medical Journal of Australia
- Reviewer, International Journal for Quality in Health Care
- Reviewer, New England Journal of Medicine
- Reviewer, JAMA
- Reviewer, BMC Health Services Research
- Reviewer, Milbank Quarterly
- Reviewer, Quality and Safety in Health Care
- Reviewer, American Journal of Managed Care
- Reviewer, Journal of Empirical Legal Studies.

Other**Jane Pirkis**

- Abstract Reviewer, 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of International Association for

Suicide Prevention, Hong Kong, 31 October – 3 November.

Rosemary McKenzie

- Launched the Positive Women Art Exhibition, "Body of Knowledge" Melbourne, 6 March
- Launched Hepatitis C Victoria research report "Hep C and Me" Melbourne, 19 May
- Opening Speaker, Rural launch of the National Heart Foundation Go For Your Life "Just Add Fruit and Veg" Forum, Castlemaine, 7 August
- Guest Speaker, AGM of Hepatitis C Victoria Launch of Strategic Plan, Melbourne, 14 October.

Conference and Public Presentations**International conferences**

Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of an Australian government initiative to improve consumer access to primary mental health care*. 18th Annual TheMHS Conference, Auckland, 4 September.

Kelaher, M., Berman, N (2008). *The Community Arts Development Scheme research and evaluation and its potential impact on the mental health and wellbeing of communities*. 5th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and the Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders. Melbourne, September.

Kelaher, M., Dunt, D., Feldman, P., Nolan, A., Raban, B. (2008). *Evaluating community-based early childhood development initiatives*. XVIII World Congress of Epidemiology, Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Kelaher, M., Warr, D., Tacticos, T., Feldman, P. (2008). *The impact of place-based stigma on health*. 5th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and the Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders. Melbourne, September.

Kelaher, M., Warr, D., Tacticos, T., Feldman, P., (2008). *The impact of Neighbourhood renewal on health and life satisfaction*. 5th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and the Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders. Melbourne, September.

Studdert, D. (2008). *Health Courts, Administrative Compensation and Patient Safety*, Medical Accidents Conference, Buchman Faculty of Law, Tel Aviv, Israel, 6 May.

Studdert, D. (2008). *Using Malpractice Claims To Improve Quality*, Keynote Address, CRICO-Stanford Medico-Legal Conference, Palo Alto, California, 17 November.

Skehan, J., Hazel, T., **Pirkis, J.** (2008). *Suicide prevention and the media: A collaborative and comprehensive approach to the issues*. Symposium presented at the 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention, Hong Kong, 31 October – 3 November.

Pirkis, J., Dare, A., Blood, RW., Rankin, B., Williamson, M. (2008). *Changes in media reporting*

of suicide in Australia between 2000/01 and 2006/07. Paper presented to the 3rd Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association for Suicide Prevention, Hong Kong, 31 October – 3 November.

Pirkis, J., Dare, A., Blood, R.W., Rankin, B., Williamson, M., Burgess, P., Jolley, D. (2008). *Changes in media reporting of suicide in Australia between 2000/01 and 2006/07.* Paper presented to the 12th European Symposium on Suicide and Suicidal Behaviour, Glasgow, 27-30 August.

International Seminar Presentations

Pirkis, J. (2008). *Suicide and the media: What we know and what we don't know.* Seminar series presented on behalf of Suicide Prevention Information New Zealand (SPINZ), Auckland-Wellington-Christchurch-Nelson, 10-12 September.

National Conferences

Bassilios, B. (2008) *Evaluation of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care Program.* 43rd Australian Psychological Society Annual Conference, Hobart, 26 September.

Bassilios, B., Fletcher, J. (2008). *Impact of Better Access on Better Outcomes and practical strategies for psychologists navigating the two programs.* 43rd Australian Psychological Society Annual Conference, Hobart, 26 September.

Fletcher, J., Pirkis, J., Christo, J., Bassilios, B. (2008). *Recent introduction of MBS item numbers for psychological services: Impact on psychologists and clients.* 43rd Australian Psychological Society Annual Conference, Hobart, 26 September.

Campbell, C.A., Dunt, D., Hsu-Hage, B. (2008). *The Use Of Narrative In Patient Education And Chronic Disease Self-Management.* SRH Rural Health Conference Shepparton, Victoria, 16 October.

Doyle, C. (2008). *Including the person with dementia.* National symposium – involve people in research, Perth, March.

Doyle, C., Dunt, D. (2008). *Raising awareness of COPD.* Melbourne Research Week Conference, Royal Melbourne Hospital, May.

Doyle, C. (2008). *Measure 2 update – are community care packages what the community need?* Hammond Care Conference, Sydney, June.

Dunt, D. (2008). *How is research and training in dementia in Australia developing?* Hammond Care Conference, Sydney, June.

Dunt, D., Day, S., Van Dort, P., Doyle, C. (2008). *How to evaluate your program.* Dementia Research Forum, Sydney, 19 September.

Fletcher, J. (2008). *Evaluation of an Australian Commonwealth Government initiative to improve consumer access to, and outcomes of, primary mental health care.* Australasian Evaluation Society Conference, Perth, 12 September.

Fletcher, J., Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of primary mental health care in rural Australia: the Access to Allied Psychological Services program.* 13th NSW Rural Mental Health Conference, 28 November.

Kelaheer, M. *Developing a theoretical framework for understanding arts and health.* The 1st UNESCO Observatory Community, Health and the Arts: Vital Arts-Vibrant Communities Conference, Melbourne, September.

McKenzie, R. (2008). *Partnerships in Evaluation Enhance Learning and Outcomes: Well for Life.* Invited presentation to the National HACC Conference, Melbourne, 22 February.

McKenzie, R. (2008). *Health Promotion for Older People and Prevention of Chronic Disease.* Invited presentation to the Victorian Rural Health Conference, Bendigo, 8 May.

Rasekaba, T M., Williams, E., Hsu-Hage B. (2008). *Can a PR Course for COPD in a Small Rural Health Service Reduce Acute Hospital Care Demand?* SRH Rural Health Conference, Shepparton, Victoria, 16 October.

Workshop Presentations

Dunt, D., Doyle, C., Day, S., Van Dort, P. (2008). *How to evaluate your program.* Interactive workshop, Dementia Forum Conference, Sydney, September.

Dunt, D. (2008). *Update on the National Evaluation of DBMAS.* Dementia Behavioural Management Advisory Service Workshop, Melbourne, August.

Pirkis, J. (2008). *Assessing study feasibility.* Invited presentation to Trauma Research Methods and Practice Workshop, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Melbourne, 20 November.

Poster Presentations

Bassilios, B. (2008). *Australian primary mental health care: Improving access and outcomes.* General Practice and Primary Health Care Research Conference, Hobart, 4-6 June.

Doyle, C., Hunter, C. (2008). *Too many cooks? Community care for people with dementia.* Australian Association of Gerontology National Conference, Fremantle, November.

Seminar Presentations

Doyle, C. (2008). *Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and mental health.* National Ageing Research Institute, Melbourne, May.

Dunt, D. (2008). *Recent developments in health program evaluation.* School of Nursing, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, July.

Pirkis, J. (2008). *Suicide and the media: What we know and what we don't know.* Invited seminar presented at Monash Institute of Health Services Research seminar series, Monash Medical Centre, Melbourne, 27 February.

Studdert, D. (2008). *Ethics Review,* School Seminar, Melbourne School of Population Health, University of Melbourne, 26 November.

Webinar Presentations

Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation component of the Telephone CBT training for allied health professionals delivering services under Access to Allied Psychological Services projects*. The Australian Psychological Society on-line training, 15 September, 18 September, 19 September, 30 September.

Fletcher, J. (2008). *Evaluation component of the Telephone CBT training for allied health professionals delivering services under Access to Allied Psychological Services projects* The Australian Psychological Society on-line training, 5 September, 1 October, 15 October, 17 December.

Kohn, F. (2008). *Evaluation component of the Telephone CBT training for allied health professionals delivering services under Access to Allied Psychological Services projects* The Australian Psychological Society on-line training, 10 September, 18 September.

Other Presentations

Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects*. NSW Mental Health Network Meeting, Sydney, 13 November.

Bassilios, B., Fletcher, J. (2008) *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects* Presentation at NSW Mental Health Network Meeting, Sydney, 31 March.

Bassilios, B., Fletcher, J. (2008). *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects*. Northern Territory Mental Health Network, Alice Springs, 10 December.

Bassilios, B. Clarke, A. (2008). *Minimum dataset training*. Strategic Data, Melbourne, 31 March.

Fletcher, J. (2008). *Access to Allied psychological Services projects (ATAPS): Minimum Data Set update*. Primary Mental Health Care Divisions National Forum, Sydney, 12 June.

Fletcher, J., Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects*. Vic Mental Health Network Meeting, Melbourne, 29 August.

Fletcher, J., Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects: Minimum Dataset changes*. Australian General Practice Network Mental Health Meeting, Melbourne, 1 September.

Fletcher, J., Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects*. QLD Mental Health Network Meeting, Brisbane, 18 March.

Fletcher, J., Bassilios, B. (2008). *Evaluation of the Access to Allied Psychological Services projects*. Queensland Mental Health Network Meeting, Brisbane, 21 October.

Kohn, F. (2008). *Presentation on the latest findings for the ATAPS programs*. General Practice Victoria

Mental Health Network, Melbourne, 9 May.

Studdert, D. (2008). *Graduation Address*. University of Melbourne, 5 April.

Studdert, D. (2008). *Administrative Compensation and Patient Safety*. Annual Address to the Medico-Legal Society of Victoria, Melbourne, 22 August.

Studdert, D. (2008) *Bad Babies: Lawyers, Doctors and the Battle Over Neurological Birth Injury*. Vice-Chancellor's Public Lecture, University of Melbourne, 25 August.

PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics published over 40 journal articles, book chapters, reports and conference papers, including 21 peer reviewed journal articles in 2008. Margaret Kelaher's paper on cancer detection among young Australian women attracted 21 newspaper articles, three television interviews and seven radio interviews. It was featured in the *Journal of the National Institute of Cancer* (impact factor=15.3) and was "Editors' Choice" in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*. Further details about this article and a selection of other 2008 peer reviewed journal articles are provided below. For details of all 2008 CHPPE publications please refer to the full school 2008 Publications Report.

Kelaher, M., Cawson, J., Miller, J., Kavanagh, A., Dunt, D. & Studdert, D.M. 2008, 'Use of breast cancer screening and treatment services by Australian women aged 25-44 following Kylie Minogue's breast cancer diagnosis', *International Journal of Epidemiology*, vol. 37, pp. 1326-1332.

Objective: To examine the effects of the publicity surrounding Kylie Minogue's diagnosis with breast cancer on doctor-referred breast imaging, image-guided biopsy, and cancer excisions among a low-risk population of women in Australia.

Method: We examine changes in unilateral and bilateral breast imaging, image-guided breast biopsies, and surgical excisions of breast cancer before and after the announcement of Kylie Minogue's diagnosis with breast cancer in May 2005. The study included procedures provided through the Australian public health system to women aged 25-44 years from October 2004 and June 2006.

Results: The odds of women aged 25-44 years undergoing imaging procedures increased by 20% in the first and second quarters after the Minogue publicity, compared to the preceding two quarters. The volume of biopsies also increased but the biopsy rate, measured as a proportion of imaging procedures, did not change among women aged 25-34 years and decreased among women aged 35-44 years. The volume of operations to excise breast cancers did not change for either age group. Compared to the 6 month period before the publicity, there was a large and significant decrease in the odds that an excision would follow biopsy (25-34 years: OR 95% CI=0.69, 0.48-0.98; 35-44 years: OR 95% CI=0.83, 0.72-0.95).

Conclusions: Highly-publicised illnesses may affect

both consumer and provider behaviour. Although they present opportunities to improve public health, they also have the potential to adversely impact the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of service delivery.

Fletcher, J.R., Bassilios, B., Kohn, F., Naccarella, L., Blashki, G.A., Burgess, P.M. & Pirkis, J.E. 2008, 'Meeting demand for psychological services for people with depression and anxiety: recent developments in primary mental health care', *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 188, no. 12, pp.S107-S109.

Objective: To examine whether there was a reduction in demand for psychological services provided through the Access to Allied Psychological Services (ATAPS) projects after the introduction of the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (Better Access) program, and whether any such reduction was greater in urban than rural areas.

Design and setting: A Division-level correlation analysis examining the relationship between the monthly number of sessions provided by allied health professionals through the ATAPS projects run by Divisions of General Practice, and allied health professional services reimbursed by Medicare Australia under the Better Access program, between 1 November 2006 and 31 March 2007.

Main outcome measures: Uptake of each program, assessed by the number of sessions provided.

Results: Overall, despite dramatic uptake of the Better Access program in the first five months after its introduction, the demand for ATAPS services was not reduced. The correlations between the numbers of sessions provided by both programs overall ($r = -0.078$; $P = 0.074$) and in rural Divisions ($r = 0.024$; $P = 0.703$) were not significant. However, there was a significant negative correlation between the numbers of sessions provided by both programs in urban Divisions ($r = -0.142$; $P = 0.019$).

Conclusions: For the first five months of the Better Access program, the two programs seemed to operate relatively independently of each other in terms of service provision, but in urban Divisions there was a move towards services provided through the Better Access program. Early indications are that the two programs are providing complementary services and are working together to address a previously unmet need for mental health care.

Jordan, H., Dunt, D., Dunn, L. and Verrinder, G. 2008, 'Evaluating the actions towards environmental health using DPSEEA (Driver, Pressure, State, Exposure and Action) and program logic', *Environmental Health*, Vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 11-25.

Summary: This paper illustrates the integration of an approach used in program evaluation with an approach used by environmental health practitioners to provide a useful tool for program planning, evaluation and decision making for environmental health practitioners. A program logic approach that focuses on and links the 'actions'

designed to improve environmental health with each of the components of the DPSEEA (Driver, Pressure, State, Exposure, Effect and Action) conceptual framework for indicator development is presented. Together, these approaches can be used to facilitate the evaluation of organised actions towards environmental health, and the effectiveness of these actions in attaining the goals that might be associated with any one or more components of the DPSEEA framework. These approaches also highlight the complexities of environmental health problems. They show the need for an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary range of professionals to assist in addressing these issues. It is important to have an understanding that they are heuristic models, and can alter with improved knowledge of the mechanisms and conditions of the environmental problem and the intervention designed to address it.

Mitchell, P. 2008, 'Mental health care roles of non-medical primary health and social care services', *Health and Social Care in the Community*, Vol. 17, no. 1., pp. 71-82 [doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2524.2008.008000].

Summary: Changes in patterns of delivery of mental health care over several decades are putting pressure on primary health and social care services to increase their involvement. Mental health policy in countries like the UK, Australia and New Zealand recognises the need for these services to make a greater contribution and calls for increased intersectoral collaboration. In Australia, most investment to date has focused on the development and integration of specialist mental health services and primary medical care, and evaluation research suggests some progress. Substantial inadequacies remain, however, in the comprehensiveness and continuity of care received by people affected by mental health problems, particularly in relation to social and psychosocial interventions. Very little research has examined the nature of the roles that non-medical primary health and social care services actually or potentially play in mental health care. Lack of information about these roles could have inhibited development of service improvement initiatives targeting these services. The present paper reports the results of an exploratory study that examined the mental health care roles of 41 diverse non-medical primary health and social care services in the state of Victoria, Australia. Data were collected in 2004 using a purposive sampling strategy. A novel method of surveying providers was employed whereby respondents within each agency worked as a group to complete a structured survey that collected quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously. This paper reports results of quantitative analyses including a tentative principal components analysis that examined the structure of roles. Non-medical primary health and social care services are currently performing a wide variety of mental health care roles and they aspire to increase their involvement in this work. However, these providers do not favour approaches involving selective targeting of clients with mental disorders.

Moeller-Saxone, K. 2008, 'Cigarette smoking and interest in quitting among consumers at a Psychiatric Disability Rehabilitation and Support Service in Victoria', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 32, no. 5, pp.479-481.

Objective: To gather information on smoking rates and interest in smoking cessation among consumers at a Psychiatric Disability Rehabilitation and Support Service (PDRSS).

Method: A questionnaire was offered to all consumers at Neami Victoria by support staff in March 2007. 280 people (81%) completed the survey. Relationships between categorical variables were analysed using Fischer's exact test ($p=0.05$).

Results: 62 per cent of consumers were smokers. 12 per cent had previously quit smoking. PDRS consumers smoked 50% more than the general population and high rates (17%) of illegal tobacco smoking were identified. 59 per cent of smokers wanted to quit, while 74% wanted to reduce.

Conclusions: While smoking rates were almost four times higher than the general population, interest in quitting and cutting down was also high.

Implications: Opportunities exist for public health advocates to collaborate with PDRSSs to increase

knowledge related to smoking harms, and to reduce smoking in this group.

STAFF

The CHPPE comprises 25 full time and part time staff, consisting of 22 Academic staff and 3 professional staff. The Centre also has 8 honorary staff members.

Three new staff joined the Centre in 2008:

- **Angeline Ferdinand.** Angeline is involved in a number of projects lead by Margaret Kelaher, 'Mapping use of eye health services by Indigenous people', 'Evaluation of the 'Go for your life' Being Active and Eating Well Indigenous Community demonstration Initiative' and the 'Evaluation of Building Bridges Phase 11 (Evaluating Practice to Reduce Discrimination Affecting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities'.
- **Elodie Fernandez and Lorraine Becker.** For short periods during 2008, both Elodie and Lorraine undertook analytical work on collaborative research projects lead by David Studdert and Lyle Gurrin from the Centre for MEGA Epidemiology.

Please refer to the School Report for a full list of staff.



Susan Day (centre) was awarded her PhD in June. Her thesis was on "An investigation into the extent to which General Practitioner (GP) remuneration can be used to overcome geographic inequities in the supply of, and demand for, Medicare-funded GP services". Susan is pictured with her supervisors David Dunt and Jane Pirkis.